SUPPLEMENT
TO THE
NONCONFORMIST.

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THE NONCONFORMIST CONFERENCE AT MANCHESTER.

(*From our own Correspondent.*)

I was as nearly as possible like the Prussians at Waterloo, too late for seeing the battle set in array, partly through my own amiable weakness, and partly through an unexpected change in railway administration, which not infrequently confounds and dismays a too confiding public. "I am going by the early train," said I, the night before, to my friend. "But why? There is such a capital express three hours later," said he; "and it gets in nearly as early." I capitulated, not knowing the trouble and woe that would befall on the morrow. The first intimation of tempest was at the station, when we found that the railway people would grant no through ticket; so we took tickets to a junction, about a hundred miles on the road. There, a bar to all further progress, and three hours to wait; at least, so said an official. Go to another official. Same answer. Try a third. Hurrah! Can get on; though by an immensely circuitous route. Train goes in two minutes. Just catch it, and away, not exactly in the direction of Manchester, still hoping to see it before night. At every junction we were stopped—even by the station-masters—until, like true Britons, determined to be up to time on the field of battle, we insisted on the advance of our contingent; and, by persevering catching of expresses at cross-country junctions, we at length found ourselves at the scene of conflict, with plenty of time to furbish our weapons, and refresh our jaded faculties of body and of mind; for having, as we considered, fought our way to Manchester, meat and drink and rest had become prime necessities.

At our hotel there was a large number of officers of the Nonconformist army; men stern and grey from many a well-fought field. "Great conference in Manchester," said the landlord, rubbing his hands, as he accounted for the rush up and down the grand staircase, and along the passages. Out of doors the prospect was dismal—the everlasting rain of Manchester. But this was a kind of gathering which no weather could affect; and so our spirits never failed. "What time is the great Inaugural at the Free Trade Hall?" "Doors open at half-past five for half-past six!" Not caring to be too early, unwilling to be too late, we struck the happy medium; at six we marched into the hall. Crowded in every part! Platform, galleries, area, private boxes, every inch of standing-ground—packed. Great posters along the passages announced that there was room for no more; and that a supplementary meeting with a strong staff of speakers would be held in the Friends' Meeting House. A supplementary meeting was no doubt the right thing, as surely establishing the fact that the immense Free Trade Hall was crowded to suffocation. But for ourselves we could not see it. We cared more for that sublime atmosphere of moral enthusiasm, which is the creation of numbers, than for the wisest utterance which eloquence could pronounce. There was another alternative, which we adopted, to go up into the gallery; work our way to a point near the speakers; and then on some "jutty, freize, buttress, or coign of vantage" (to use the words of Mr. Richard), live for four hours the life of a fly—clinging somehow or other to the wall of the building, since the floor was occupied, and we are not yet so far advanced in fly calisthenics as to hold on by vulcanised india-rubber soles to the ceiling.

If we ever had a doubt as to the force in which Nonconformists would assemble after the postponement of December, doubt would instantly have fled like mists of morning. With all our experience of the Free Trade Hall—and we have been in it on occasions now historic—we had never seen a more grand, a more enthusiastic assembly. The leaders of Nonconformity seemed to be all there; the floor was crowded with men who were, each in his own sphere, centres of influence and power. "Why don't these parsons stay at home and mind their own work?" said in our hearing, on one of the Lancashire railways, a Tory, overbearing and insolent, as is the manner of *some* of that ilk. Our answer would have been, "*They* must fight for liberty, brotherhood, equality, who understand the principles of freedom"; but on this great occasion laymen were to the fore, and parsons were scarcely in the majority. The galleries were filled with spectators, visitors, call them what you will—and among them a large number of ladies.

After the reports and telegraphed sketch of the inaugural meeting, which appeared in your columns the morning after, we need not describe again what then took place, but go at once to the first meeting of the conference proper on Wednesday morning. In the course of Tuesday evening we had slipped out of the great meeting to take a look at our exiled friends in the supplementary gathering in the Friends' Meeting House. On glancing round the building, we wondered how eighteen hundred and fifty delegates, besides visitors, were to be crushed into so small a space. It was our ignorance. The Meeting House was eminently adapted for its purpose. It is so constructed as to be capable of enlargement to double its usual size, by the removal of certain screens. These had disappeared when the delegates poured into the building long before the time fixed for the commencement of proceedings. On glancing round, the real strength of the conference could be better estimated than on the preceding night, when the delegates were more or less mingled with others in a promiscuous assembly. The delegates were now for the most part on the ground-floor. As we looked at them, it did not seen extravagant to believe that the very flower of Nonconformist chivalry was there. The chair was taken *pro tem.* by Mr. Richard Johnson, who presided over the meeting during the transaction of some preliminary business, and delivered a carefully-prepared written address. He opened with a graceful allusion to that painful event which had led to the postponement of the conference, and with an intimation that the very first business would be the moving of a memorial to the Queen, expressive of the sympathy of Nonconformists for herself and other members of the royal family. This struck the conference at once as pre-eminently the right thing to be first of all done. A few words then followed on the general business, in which the Chairman pleaded that the great contention might be carried forward in a manner "worthy of the simple, serious, God-fearing men and women of whom we are the delegates," and of "the lives of our predecessors whose praise is in the churches, who were angry and sinned not, who united loving patience with manly resistance to oppression, who were saints and therefore patriots." Allusions towads the close to the men of Birmingham, to Mr. Dale and Mr. Dixon, and to Mr. Miall, were received with rapturous applause. The memorial to the Queen was then read, without being formally moved and seconded, and was carried with enthusiastic unanimity. Introductory business having been despatched, the chair was then taken by Mr. E. Miall, M.P.; and, if in these columns the writer may be permitted, he would say that he was the right man in the right place, for surely no one can have higher claim to lead than he, who is the acknowledged leader of the men who champion, in this our time, the cause of ecclesiastical freedom and equality. His taking the chair was the signal for a perfect storm of applause: and such tempests were very frequent throughout the whole of the proceedings. They came from the intense fervour of the assembled delegates. Nothing was more marked than the presence of apparently antagonistic moods of mind throughout—an intense fiery earnestness; and yet a perfect self-government. The enthusiasm was not passionate in the less noble sense of that term; but exalted, because never evoked save in view of great principles, contingent perils of the first magnitude, and formidable duties; so that there was ever present that which would awe and subdue as well as inspire. Of Mr. Miall's address, we will say here only this, that it was the key-note for all subsequent addresses and debate. If anyone had any fears, as we ourselves had, of the conference being thorough and united, those fears were dissipated by the unanimous response evoked by the chairman's address. The logic of events seems to have fixed the hitherto doubtful and hesitating. The dial is now clearly pointing to that elementary literary and scientific instruction, with which alone States, as States, are competent to deal.

At an early stage the arrangements for orderly debate were announced. Every speaker had to send his name up, and then come to the platform. Twenty minutes were allowed to papers, and ten to speakers; a bell to ring three minutes before the time had expired, and then at the last moment the bell would give the decisive sound. Such arrangements have great disadvantages, which are sufficiently obvious; but we are persuaded that, on the whole, the advantages predominate.

The first question was now introduced by Professor A. S. Wilkins, M.A., Professor of Latin in Owens College, Manchester, viz., "Religious Equality in the Universities." He pointed out what had been obtained, but how much, notwithstanding, remains to be secured. He is a comparatively young man, but his paper was clear, vigorous, able, and exhaustive. The first resolution was moved by a veteran in the cause of University reform, Mr. James Heywood, formerly M.P. for South Lancashire, whose racy speech, in which he half jocosely proposed, though the meeting did not sympathise with him, that Mr. Miall should be a life peer, greatly enlivened the audience. But, alas! just as he seemed to be getting into the swing of his speech the bell suddenly cut it short. Mr. Neville Goodman, thus warned, plunged at once into his subject, and did great execution, by reason of his great earnestness and evidently intimate knowledge of the Universities. We refer readers to our report for what he said, more concerned here to note that he is himself an illustration of the injustice which even yet reigns at our national seats of learning. Mr. Goodman is "one of the most accomplished students of natural science in the University of Cambridge. Some years ago he took the highest honours in that branch of science which Cambridge has to give, yet being a conscientious Nonconformist, he has not only been unable to reap a single one of the rewards which would have been his had he been a member of the Establishment, but though resident in Cambridge and a successful private teacher, has been shut out from all educational posts in the University." These are the words of Professor W. Steadman Aldis, M.A., a few years since senior wrangler, now professor of mathematics at what we may call the infant University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, himself also an illustration of the same injustice. On this motion there were three volunteer speakers—Professor Massey, of Spring-hill College; the Hon. Lyulph Stanley, who gave pointed practical advice, founded on an intimate knowledge of University life and politics; and the Rev. C. E. B. Reed, lately a Nonconformist student of Trinity College, Cambridge, and son of Mr. C. Reed, one of the M.P.'s for Hackney. Mr. Reed suggested whether it would not be possible and right for a "national" university to grant divinity scholarships on the basis of competent knowledge, without regard to theological opinions. Mr. R. W. Dale, M.A., whose paternal interest in keeping the conference in the right track was throughout very noteworthy, deprecated the raising

of this question, explained a modification in the resolution, and the conference voted it unanimously.

Then occurred an incident which varied for awhile the necessary monotony of even earnest debate. The next paper was on the "Endowed Schools Act and the Claims of Dissenters." This had been prepared by Professor Sheldon Amos, M.A.; but that gentleman was ill. So his wife volunteered to read the paper; and there she stood, with her intelligent, gentle, womanly face which shone on the assembly that gloomy Manchester morning, and her quiet, modest bearing. For some time the great assembly did its very best to hear; but it was of no use. Simultaneously there came from several parts of the Meeting-house, "Can't hear." It had been prearranged that should Mrs. Amos fail in strength of voice, the Rev. S. A. Steinthal should read for her; and soon the lady was obliged to give way. For our own part, we should have been glad to have heard the silvery music float on for a short twenty minutes, though we had not distinguished one word, and to have trusted to reports on the morrow for the contents of the paper; but that was not the general feeling. The mover of the resolution on the subject, the Rev. J. Jenkyn Brown, of Birmingham—well known for his able and gallant championship of Nonconformist claims in the columns of the *Spectator*—completely carried away the assembly by his vigorous and direct onslaught on the Endowed Schools Commissioners and their governors, *ex officio*, co-optative, and representative, and by his dry, caustic humour. It was seconded by Mr. W. M. Fawcett in a weighty speech, which referred to the "dexterous manipulation" in the choice of governing bodies; and, after brief discussion, the motion, with rather a strong rider, to the effect "that the commissioners have hitherto shown such a decided leaning to one denomination as to forfeit the confidence of Nonconformists," was unanimously carried. Prior to the vote, Mr. Dale made a very useful speech, which will, we hope, excite attention. He pointed out, not only that the commissioners, albeit "fair-minded and generous men," required watching, but that they have adopted some valuable memoranda, which give excellent opportunities to persons resident in the various localities, especially under the 19th clause, and Mr. Dale volunteered the statement that such appeals will be carefully considered. When a scheme is published, the commissioners are not absolutely committed to the details, but are, says Mr. Dale, "perfectly prepared to listen to statements, drawn up and fairly supported, sent from the localities to which the scheme applies." We hope our readers will take a note of this, and follow the advice of Mr. Davids, "to be wide awake, and look after the endowed schools in their several localities." At this first meeting there was not one discordant voice nor a single dissentient vote.

A change became necessary at night. The Friends' Meeting House was proving after all too limited for the 1,885 delegates, which, we were told, represented 800 constituencies. We had ourselves gone down in pretty good time, but were compelled to seek a place in the back settlements whence to see and hear. We were actually located, where it would be impossible to do either, save at the cost of a half-broken back; when, lo! a voice, just close at hand, announced that the meeting was adjourned to the Free Trade Hall. Being near the door, we were almost first in the street, and in a moment were charging the head of the noble three times "six hundred," over passengers and policemen in the streets, to the terror and amazement of the population of Manchester. Those who had had no seats, or seats not worth having, now found themselves ensconced in the high places of the assembly, and they who had been in what we may term conference clover suddenly found themselves wandering without in desert places. The last were first, and the first were last. Nor was this the end of the confusion. Delegates had got into the galleries of the hall, and visitors were on the floor. Mr. W. Crosfield, on taking the chair, asked that this might be rectified. No one budged. But when Mr. Dale pointed out that the moral weight of the assembly would, in a case of voting, be seriously impaired by the delegates not being together on the floor, and further appealed to the honour of gentlemen, not delegates, to betake themselves to the gallery, then Nonconformist loyalty to law and order triumphed, and, at considerable sacrifices in many instances, gentlemen took their proper places. The chairman opened with a few business-like words, and immediately the Rev. H. W. Crosskey, of Birmingham, an indefatigable member of the "Central Committee," read an exhaustive and well-reasoned paper on "Fees in Denominational Schools," which showed a complete mastery of the subject. With much effect he remarked that while a sectarian system on an enormous scale was being established, they were coolly asked to pause in their objections until the work was over, and the new vested interests had become too powerful to remove! The Rev. J. G. Rogers, in moving the first resolution, delivered a most powerful speech, which went at once to the heart of the question and of the conference: it sounded through the hall like the voice of a trumpet. The Rev. J. A. Picton, M.A., was to have seconded the resolution, but being unable to be present, his place was taken by the Rev. H. W. Parkinson, who, in a searching, sarcastic address, full of dry humour, well sustained the position he was suddenly called to fill. After a speech by Mr. Jesse Collings, came Dr. Raleigh. It would be impossible to convey by even a verbatim report an adequate impression of his power, ease, felicity of illustration, moral elevation, and religious earnestness. His speech was an event. Though this accomplished and influential minister has, from the time of the passing of the Education Act, gone in with all his energy against its obnoxious provisions, he has, as is well known, for years past hesitated as to the policy, if not the principles, of the Liberation movement. The rev. Doctor has at length been taught by events. "There is," he said on Thursday, "only one way out of all this. Let all Churches be disestablished," and the protracted cheering which greeted this frank avowal showed that Dr. Raleigh's hearers attached no little significance to his declaration. Where now are the so-called "moderate" Dissenters? Truly, whoever may lose by this great demonstration at Manchester, the Liberation Society will be the gainer. After speeches from Messrs. Warburton, Heath, and the Rev. F. S. Johnstone, the recently elected member of the Merthyr School Board—who, by the way, supported his proposal to demand the "unconditional" repeal of the 25th clause on the ground that it will probably be proposed to compensate the denominational schools by additional grants from the consolidated fund—some sensation was occasioned by the introduction of the first martyr in the cause, Mr. Harvey Adams, who on the proceeding Monday had had his weather-glass,—pointing at "stormy," said Mr. Dale—seized for the new Church-rate, commonly called the Education rate. Mr. Adams was most cordially received, and briefly addressed the conference. Then followed an incisive paper on State grants to denominational day-schools, by the Rev. Charles Williams, of Accrington, who pleaded for secular education not only on political but on religious grounds; after which a resolution affirming the absolute necessity of combined secular and separate religious education, the latter by voluntary effort, was moved by Professor F. E. Anthony, of the Western College, and seconded by the Rev. S. A. Steinthal, whose report of a recent conversation with an Irish Protestant prelate was very *apropos*. Thereupon arose the first danger to the absolute unanimity of the conference. The Rev. Alfred Tilly, the Rev. F. S. Johnstone, and subsequently several others, including Mr. Joseph Spencer, the Rev. R. Harley, and the Rev. R. Bruce, wished to effect verbal, perhaps more than verbal alterations, which seemed to them important; but the conference, urged by Mr. Miall not to get into wrangling about "verbal alterations," nor to fail to be "the men of business they ought to be," passed the resolution in its original form, with the omission, however, of one clause, which for grave reasons came up on the following evening. There was once more the most perfect unanimity. Thus the conference without a discordant voice affirmed the necessity of purely secular State education.

And now what shall we say of the second morning meeting? All hitherto had been in a certain sense preliminary to this. For this meeting every man had come to Manchester. For power of speech, boldness of opinion, unanimity and enthusiasm, it was, without exception, the noblest Nonconformist demonstration it was ever our privilege to witness. It was impossible again to obtain the Free Trade Hall, and the conference had therefore to make the best of the Friends' Meeting House, which was of course densely packed. The chairman was Mr. W. Middlemore, of Birmingham, who opened with words fit and few. The first paper, really on this subject, "The Political Relations of Nonconformists to the *Leaders* of the Liberal party," was read by Mr. H. Richard, M.P., and occupied considerably more than the regulation twenty minutes. It was a masterly historical *résumé* of the relation of Nonconformists to successive Liberal Governments from the Revolution of 1688; showing how they had been kicked and cuffed, embarrassed, hindered, insulted, and contemned by those who were professedly their friends. The long-suffering, dignified attitude of the Nonconformists during these two centuries was then eloquently described. But the climax of interest was reached when Mr. Richard asked the conference what Nonconformists were now to do. The sense and substance of his advice, as of the unanimous feeling of the meeting, may be gathered from the resolution which was subsequently passed. On Mr. Richard beginning his paper, the conference gave him a complete ovation; but on his resuming his seat the two thousand started to their feet and cheered to the echo. Never, perhaps, in any such assembly was this so often done during a single meeting. The tide seemed to gather force with almost every address; and these risings of the assembly seemed like a succession of great waves, which, coming periodically after a succession of smaller ones, marked the magnitude of the advance. Mr. Chamberlain's paper on the "Political Organisation of Nonconformists" was able and telling, though it was necessarily at a disadvantage coming directly after so much Welsh fire. He too, was enthusiastically cheered, and his eminently practical advice will, we doubt not, be well conned. Mr. Stitt moved, with brief speech, cut short by the inexorable "ten minutes' bell," and Mr. Dale seconded, without a word, the succeeding resolution. Once and again during the morning, by signs of impatience quite unmistakeable, the earnest men who had travelled some of them hundreds of miles intent on serious business, showed that they could brook no delay in coming to the grave practical question before them. This was the temper henceforth—glad welcome to every practical guiding word, and utter intolerance of all mere speech-making whatever. Mr. Dale explained that he was reserving himself to speak at a later stage on an amendment which had been threatened, and which was immediately forthcoming. Now, at length, we began to tremble. We were never more mistaken in our lives. The Rev. J. G. Rogers rose to point out that the resolution was not strong enough to meet the full convictions and determinations of the conference. He moved that, instead of saying that the Nonconformists of Great Britain will not accept as a satisfactory representative any Parliamentary candidate who will not pledge himself to the amendment of the Education Act, the conference should declare that Nonconformists will positively not vote for such. This open, manly declaration of war aroused the assembly again to its feet. It was seconded in a few bold, sensible words by Mr. Binns, and then Henry Vincent came to the front, another tempest of cheering greeting his advance. He spoke in his very best manner, and on every account he advised unanimity. He himself was ready to support either resolution or amendment, or both together. His declaration that Nonconformists "stand in the presence of a political and ecclesiastical conspiracy against the liberty of the English people" was overwhelmingly impressive, and he proceeded to allude to dark priestly influences in words that seemed most solemn to those who understand their gloomy significance. "We do not charge Mr. Gladstone with being the leader of that conspiracy, but *there is a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself.* Every administration in this nation is partly guided by the advice of unseen men, who are behind the scenes, and who give weighty influence to the existing Cabinet." Soon the difficulty was adjusted, Mr. Dale announcing that Mr. Rogers's meaning had been accepted and embodied in a rider: and further, that in other respects the original resolution was strengthened and improved. After a few practical words, ardent with earnestness, from Mr. E. M. Richards, M.P. for Cardiganshire, the conference insisted on having no more speeches, but on instantly voting; and a stronger resolution than even the committee dared to propose was carried unanimously, not alone by show of hands, but by every man rising to his feet and threatening to lift the roof off with the almost frantic violence of his cheering. At this grand moment the interest of the conference culminated, the climax was reached.

Here we stay our hand. What was done at night anent Irish Education, the Scotch Education Bill, the function of the day-teacher as to religious education, Mr. Miall's motion for Disestablishment, albeit very important, we may not linger to describe here: is it not written in the chronicle of the Nonconformist Conference at Manchester? Only lest our last touch of description should be misunderstood, we add that, as a set off to the im-

mense enthusiasm, there is to be placed the most admirable reticence and self-control of hundreds. "In the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion," there was maintained "a temperance that gave it smoothness." As we glanced around, it was easy to see that there were present scores—not to say hundreds—of the ablest and most eloquent men Nonconformity had ever produced, who would have been able enough to instruct, interest, and even enchain that august assembly, but who were well content to be eloquently silent, concerned only that the one great object should be secured—to come to one mind, and to let the Government once and for all know what Nonconformity meant to do.

Correspondence.

NONCONFORMIST WAHABEES.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—Under the above title the "Hertfordshire Incumbent" writes to the *Times* to prove that the Nonconformists have no grievance in the matter of popular education. There is nothing, in his judgment, necessitating even a "conscience clause." To show this, the "Hertfordshire Incumbent" quotes the evidence of the Assistant-Commissioners of Education, given in the report of the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, prefacing his extracts by remarking that "among the names of the signataries appears that of Edward Miall, who is now taking so prominent a part at Manchester."

Sir, a "Hertfordshire Incumbent" need not be told that this language is calculated to create a false impression. Mr. Miall did not sign a report stating that there was no religious difficulty in the public schools; all that that hon. gentleman signed was a statement that the assistant-commissioners used such and such language regarding the religious difficulty. The commissioners reported this, as in duty they were bound to do, and then proceeded to suggest the possible necessity of a conscience clause. They thought that it "might become the duty of the Committee of Council to consider whether the public fund placed at their disposal in aid of popular education may not be administered in such a manner as will insure the children of the poor in all places the opportunity of partaking of its benefits without exposing their parents to a violation of their religious convictions."

Well, the "Hertfordshire Incumbent" believes that there is now no grievance, and that no person's conscience can be violated. Then, how is it that the clergy all along resisted the imposition upon them of a "conscience clause"? If they did not abuse their power, why did they claim the right to abuse it? If they did not want to teach Nonconformist children Church doctrine, why oppose the suggestion that the Nonconformist children should be protected? and why refuse them that protection? The fact is, as we all know, that protection has been greatly needed, and is no doubt greatly needed now. What happens is described by Mr. Skeats in his pamphlet on "Conscience Clauses and Conscience Rights," and I cannot do better than quote that writer's language:—

It may happen, however, in some remote districts—happily getting fewer and fewer every year—where even a public day-school does not at present exist, that there will be found clergymen who will apparently need the curb of the proposed clause. In all these cases it will be practically useless. It will be no sufficient restraint upon the one, nor protection to the other party. Where an intolerant "squarson" reigns supreme, the man who needs the protection of a conscience clause will not dare to take advantage of it. It would be ruin to him, or if not ruin, certain loss and certain disgrace. The social influence of the Established Church in such districts is beyond the realisation of those who have neither seen nor felt its practical effects. Liberty of thought exists because it cannot be checked; liberty of spoken thought there is very little; liberty of action is almost unknown. The poor man who would not send his children to a national school to say the catechism, or who should withdraw them from church, would be a marked man. He would be refused employment, custom would be withdrawn from him, the dole of bread and coals, and the supply of blankets in winter would be stopped; he would be practically excommunicated and ostracised. A dozen conscience clauses would be no protection to him. Give in he must, or starve, or leave. This is no fancy picture—I wish for the sake of humanity and religion, and for the sake of England, that it were.

I suppose that even a "Hertfordshire Incumbent" will acknowledge a "grievance" here.

But, after all, this clever writer fails to hit the mark. It is not where he has shot his arrows. Granting that no child's conscience is abused, and that no child needs protection from priestly tyranny, what then? That is not all the matter, nor the half of it. It is the system of subsidising religious sects to teach their doctrines to anybody that is objected to. The "Hertfordshire Incumbent" had better deal with this, the real issue, when he next writes, and not seek to create prejudice by raising a different question.

Yours, &c.,
A WAHABEE.

A CORRECTION.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—I see that in your "Summary" of the 24th inst. I am alluded to as a Churchman.

As I am proud of my Nonconformity, and have no desire to be "comprehended" in any established sect, permit me to correct the misstatement, and to say that I am a Unitarian.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
J. CHAMBERLAIN.

Southborne, Augustus-road, Edgbaston,
Jan. 27, 1872.

CONSCIENCES AND CONSCIENCES.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—Wishing to address Nonconformists, I cannot do better than ask you to insert what I have to say, for your paper is the most widely circulated among those whom I may call, with Mr. Dale, the "Nonconformists in revolt."

For some years before church-rates were abolished, the testimony of persons popularly known as "church-rate martyrs" was a powerful ally to arguments against those rates which appealed merely to reason.

In the matter of education now being debated, one of your body, a Mr. Adams, has become an "education-rate martyr," and has sealed his testimony by the loss of a weather-glass. His action has been approved by the great conference at Manchester, the members of which lately rose *en masse* to greet their champion.

My only object in writing to you is to say that if Nonconformists should succeed in moulding the Education Act according to your wishes, I shall in like manner become an "education martyr" on the other side: for I shall then refuse on conscientious grounds to pay an education rate, though I shall feel myself bound to support a denominational school with a sum larger than the rate levied upon me. Further, I have no doubt of persuading many thousands of Churchmen to follow my example.

We claim the same right that you do to judge for ourselves what we will consider cases of conscience, and when. You now make it a point to refuse payment of rates which may even indirectly be applied to denominational purposes. You have not yet refused taxes which are applied in part to pay the salaries of denominational chaplains. Be you judges of your own consciences: we will be judges of ours.

We have a conscientious objection to pay rates in support of a system which will tend to bring religion into disfavour and contempt by associating it with extra taskwork in the minds of all the rising generation. The old rhyme says—

Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.

We hold that your system will go far to make religion hateful. To that opinion we adhere, even though you should disclaim the intention to bring about the result we expect. To that result we have a conscious objection, and I, for one, will not pay towards it.

Speaking generally, I hold, in common with most people who have ever thought anything about moral questions (*vide* Blackstone's "Commentaries," Introduction), that there is a conscientious obligation to obey the law. But if disobedience is accepted by our rulers as a mere stimulating agitation, and if the not very terrible consequences of such disobedience have with some people the convincing power of martyrdom, I promise you that the system shall be tried on our side as well as on yours.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,
GILBERT VENABLES.

[As the Education Act of 1870 classes religious teaching with "extra work," Mr. Venables need not wait, but should become a martyr at once.—ED. *Nonconformist.*]

THE LAST SEVEN CAPITAL SENTENCES.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—The last seven capital sentences in England and their results (all within about a month) afford a most conclusive proof that the law of murder should be so amended without delay as to be at least capable of being generally carried out. At present it is not so, nor has it been so for many years, and the obstacles have increased till they have fairly brought about a dead-lock.

In the first of the recent cases, the Derby murder, the judge interposed and advised a commutation, which was granted. In the second and third cases, at Leicester, the prosecutor, all the jury, who had returned a verdict of guilty, and several members of Parliament, interposed, with success, to prevent the execution of the law. In the fourth instance, at Coventry, the lord lieutenant of the county, several M.P.'s and magistrates, and a number of other persons, interposed, and again with success. In the fifth case, at Cheltenham, a number of clergy, "Friends," and others, interposed, but failed. This was the only one of the seven murderers upon whom the sentence was carried out. In the sixth and seventh instances (the Rev. Mr. Watson and Miss Edmunds), nearly the whole nation may be said to have successfully obstructed the carrying out of the law. Yet even the recommendations of the judges in both instances, and of the medical men in the latter, although acted upon, are admitted to be in opposition to the law as it stands defined.

In America statutes are sometimes passed, or retained, with an understanding that their operation shall be only nominal. But such a state of things is greatly to be deprecated here. All genuine respect for the laws and constitution of England, and all due consideration for the successive Home Secretaries, now demand a prompt alteration of the statutes affecting murder. Public security also demands it. And many law-abiding subjects of the Queen are entitled to it, for, as an esteemed correspondent lately remarked to me in reference to two of the above cases, "What a paradox it is that the best citizens should so often be called upon to prevent the execution of the laws of their country!"

Yours truly,
WILLIAM TALLACK.

Jan. 25.

CHALLENGE AND NOBLE RESPONSE.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—At a meeting held at the Alexandra Orphanage in June last, at which the Earl of Shaftesbury presided, two members of the committee offered 100 guineas each upon the condition that the number was made up to fifty by the 31st instant—this day. Others accepted the challenge; an appeal was made, the result is that we have forty-three, and only forty-three, names down, so that we still want seven to complete. There is little doubt of all paying up if we can secure these seven at once. I therefore appeal to your readers, the earnest and liberal Nonconformists of England, to supply this small number. By so doing they will help to reduce our debt to a mere trifle. The payment may be by four annual instalments or in one round sum, as may be convenient. The forty-three contributions of 100 guineas each, is a noble response, for which the committee are very grateful. Cheques should be crossed "London and County Bank," and made payable to,

Yours truly,
JOSEPH SOUL, Hon. Sec.

Office, 73, Cheapside, E.C.

Donations or annual subscriptions to any amount will be thankfully received.

Religious and Denominational News.

Mr. Thomas Hope, of the Lancashire Independent College, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the Independent Church, Bungay, Suffolk.

FALFIELD.—Through the kind liberality of some friends, entirely without his knowledge, the Rev. D. Griffiths, of Falfield, Gloucestershire, was recently agreeably surprised to find that he had been made a member of the Pastors' Retiring Fund.

RETIREMENT OF THE REV. C. M. BIRRELL.—The Rev. C. M. Birrell has tendered the resignation of his office as pastor of the church in Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool. Mr. Birrell, who has been led to this step by the continued insufficiency of his health to meet the requirements of his position, has agreed to remain with his people until his successor is appointed. He has held the office for nearly thirty-six years.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER IN ROME.—Daily meetings were held during the week of united prayer in all the Italian Protestant places of worship in Rome. Prayer-meetings were also held by the English, at which addresses were given by the Revs. Dr. Philip and Lewis (Free Church Presbyterian), H. Hamilton (Church of England), G. F. Newman (Congregational), A. Paton (Church of Scotland), and Admiral Fishbourne.

THE LATE DR. ROBSON, OF GLASGOW.—On Sunday special services were held in Wellington-street United Presbyterian Church, in connection with the death of the Rev. Dr. Robson, which took place on the morning of Sabbath, the 21st inst. The church was crowded on both occasions. The Rev. Dr. Ker, of Sydney-place United Presbyterian Church, officiated in the forenoon, choosing as his text the last clause of Heb. xi. 35—"That they might obtain a better resurrection." He concluded an impressive sermon by saying, "May it be ours to follow in his steps, that we may share in his joys!" In the afternoon, Dr. Black occupied the pulpit, and gave a memoir of the deceased minister.

MANCHESTER.—The annual meeting of the congregation connected with Coupland-street United Presbyterian Church was held on Jan. 24, James Boyd, Esq., in the chair. A report, prepared by the committee of management, on the work of the congregation during the past year, which was read and adopted, showed that the membership had increased to 323, and the average attendance at the quarterly communion services had been 220. The amount received in voluntary contributions for the support of the church had been 850*l.*, in addition to 500*l.* for missionary and charitable purposes. No charge is made for pew-rents, and all the funds are provided by the voluntary contributions of members and friends. The mission in Hall-street had continued to extend; attendance on the week-day classes and the missionary's teaching having largely increased. A new committee of management for the present year having been elected, the chairman read an affectionate letter from the Rev. Joseph Corbett, the pastor of the congregation, who was prevented by illness from attending the meeting.

MR. SPURGEON repeated his lecture on Rome at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on Tuesday. He said that his first lecture was never meant for the general public. He regarded his congregation as his friends, and he liked to stand and talk with them without restraint. No one cared to be watched in his own house. Mr. Spurgeon referred to his illness, and advised every congregation to give their

ministers a rest. They need not send them to Jericho, but let them have a little leisure so that their brains might be refreshed. As for himself, he had been six years without taking rest, and he found that his physical strength was seriously weakened. No one living knew the toil and care he had to bear. He had to look after the orphanage, had charge of a church with 4,000 members; sometimes there were marriages and burials to be performed, there was the weekly sermon to be revised, the *Sword and Trowel* to be revised, and besides all this there was a weekly average of 500 letters to be answered. This, however, was only half his duties, for there were innumerable churches established by friends with the affairs of which he was closely connected, to say nothing of those cases of difficulty which were constantly being referred to him.

ADELPHI CHAPEL, HACKNEY-ROAD.—On Thursday evening, Jan. 18, a special meeting was held in Adelphi Chapel, Hackney-road, under the presidency of Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P. After tea—which was bountifully provided, at the expense of some of the ladies of the congregation, and served in the school-house—the assembly adjourned to the chapel. The attendance was excellent. The chairman was supported by Josias Alexander, Esq., A. F. Sargeant, Esq., Jas. Spicer, jun., Esq., H. R. Williams, Esq., and several other gentlemen, lay and ministerial. In a brief paper, the Rev. A. A. Ramsey glanced at the history of Adelphi Chapel, and furnished a *résumé* of the work accomplished by the church and congregation, during the seven years of his pastorate. From this statement it appeared that more than 500 members had been received into Christian fellowship. The day and Sunday-schools had increased two-fold. The school building had been enlarged at a cost of 700*l.* and paid for. A children's church had been organised, with Sunday morning and evening services, and is progressing most hopefully. A Sunday evening mission service had been established in the school-house, and attended by hundreds of the poor. And a sum of 1,400*l.* had been expended in efforts to evangelise the immediate neighbourhood. The chapel has lately been remodelled at an expense of 1,330*l.*, and in the effort to raise this amount the minister and congregation are at present earnestly engaged. The treasurer's balance-sheet showed that about 600*l.* had been contributed and collected for this object within the last six months, and 300*l.* more are expected to accrue from the labours of the ladies' committee. The chairman delivered an admirable speech, and with his accustomed liberality, promised a donation of 100*l.*, to one half of his donation being attached the condition that the remaining sum required by the church should be raised within six months. His generous challenge was heartily accepted by the meeting, and immediately elicited from A. F. Sargeant, Esq., a similar promise of 50*l.* The total financial results of the meeting in cash and promises amounted to 225*l.* Addresses were delivered by the Revs. G. D. Macgregor, Dr. Leask, R. Thomas, W. Tyler, and Messrs. Alexander and Sargeant.

LEICESTER.—On Friday week, there gathered in the Freemasons' Hall, Halford-street, Leicester, an assemblage of about 160 persons, consisting of the leading friends of the Rev. Joseph Wood, who had seceded from Oxford-street Chapel, to devise means to retain the services of their late minister in Leicester. The Mayor (J. Stafford, Esq.), was unanimously voted to the chair. After religious service, the Mayor said that they must all exceedingly regret that a work of so valuable a character as had been carried on at Oxford-street should have been so abruptly broken up. A provisional committee meeting had been held a few nights ago, when there was a unanimous and hearty feeling of sympathy for Mr. Wood, and of desire that he should not leave Leicester. The friends then assembled, to the number of a little over twenty, had promised subscriptions to the amount of between two and three hundred pounds. He had little doubt the meeting would endorse what that committee had done. In order to lose no time, they had taken the Corn Exchange for religious services for the next four Sundays. Mr. F. Hewitt proposed the first resolution as follows:—"That this meeting desires to take the earliest opportunity of expressing its hearty sympathy with their pastor, the Rev. Joseph Wood, and their high value of his ministrations amongst them; and extremely regrets circumstances should have arisen, which rendered it imperative for him to resign his connection with Oxford-street Chapel; and hereby pledges to Mr. Wood their hearty support with a view to secure his continuance in Leicester." Mr. John Cox, in seconding the resolution, said he valued the ministry of Mr. Wood, and had reason to know that much good had been done. He should throw his heart into this new work, and give it all his sympathy and support. (Applause.) Mr. William Baines supported the resolution, bearing high testimony to Mr. Wood, and the proposition was further spoken to by Messrs. R. W. Widdowson, R. Cox, C. Rose, A. Evans, W. Evans, and others. The resolution was carried unanimously, amid much cheering. The Rev. J. Wood suitably responded; a provisional committee was formed, and it was decided that the new church should be a Congregational one. On the following Sunday the opening services of the new church were held in the Corn Exchange, the Rev. J. Wood preaching morning and evening. Both congregations were very large, every available seat in the large room being occupied in the evening.

Epitome of News.

The *Observer* states that the Queen will not open Parliament in person.

The Prince of Wales continues to improve in health, and is able to take outdoor walking exercise.

It has been decided that Mr. Disraeli will address meetings at Manchester on April 2, at Liverpool on April 4, and at Preston on April 6.

The Rev. William Dunkerley, Methodist New Connexion, Leeds, has resigned his position to accept a curacy at Dewsbury.

It is stated that the judgment in the Bennett case may be expected in a fortnight. The *Record* says it is already prepared and in type.

Thomas Wrigley, Esq., of Timberhurst, near Bury, has been appointed High Sheriff for the county palatine of Lancaster.

A dinner was given on Saturday to Sir R. Collier, on his elevation to the Bench, by a number of his former colleagues at the bar. The Attorney-General presided.

Earl Morley, an officer of Her Majesty's Household, has, it is stated, been offered and has refused the post of Lieutenant-Governor of Madras, at a salary of 10,000*l.*

The other day the Queen forwarded 50*l.* towards the new Wesleyan Sabbath-schools at Newport, Isle of Wight. This is believed to be the first donation Her Majesty has given towards a Wesleyan object.

Parliament opens next Tuesday. The address in the Commons will be moved by the Hon. Henry Strutt, one of the members for East Derbyshire, and seconded by Mr. J. J. Colman, member for Norwich.

The *Echo* has reason to believe the Government regard with much confidence the provisions of the Treaty of Washington as to their exclusion of the extrinsic and extravagant claims included in the American case.

The *Echo* understands that all the preparations in St. Paul's for the thanksgiving service will be made under the direction of the First Commissioner of Works, and at the national expense. It is not unlikely that Wednesday, the 28th February, will be selected, but the day is not yet absolutely fixed.

Both Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli have issued the customary circular to their supporters on the approach of the Parliamentary session. Mr. Disraeli refers especially to the election of a Speaker. It is now understood that Mr. Brand will not be opposed. There will be the customary full-dress Parliamentary dinners on Monday evening next.

At the meeting of the Amnesty Association in Dublin, a letter was read from Mr. Gladstone, in rejoinder to the resolution adopted by the association in answer to Mr. Bruce's letter on the subject of the Fenian prisoners. The letter conveys a distinct refusal of the demand of the Amnesty Association.

The list of mathematical honours at Cambridge was issued on Friday. The senior wrangler is Mr. Robert Rumsey Webb, of St. John's College, son of the late Mr. Thomas Webb, of Monmouth. Mr. Horace Lamb, of Trinity, a native of Stockport, comes second; whilst twenty-ninth on the list of wranglers is the name of a son of the late Mr. Dickens.

Mr. James Stansfeld, father of the Right Hon. James Stansfeld, died on Tuesday at his residence, Halifax, in his 80th year. For thirty years Mr. Stansfeld was judge of the Halifax County Court, a position from which he retired only in September last.

The Right Hon. John Bright, in a letter read at a meeting at Birmingham on Monday night, expressed regret that he was unable to attend a large public meeting, though he hopes he will be able to attend the House of Commons during some portion of the ensuing session. Further, he expressed the hope that a determination to reduce the expenditure will be manifested by the administration and the House.

Mr. Childers was examined before the Megæra Commissioners on Saturday, and made some important statements respecting the changes he introduced at the Admiralty. The right hon. gentleman explained that the question of employing the Megæra for the Australian voyage never came before him. The inquiry was brought to a termination on Monday, and the committee adjourned *sine die*.

A meeting of the justices of the peace for the city of Manchester was held on Friday, at which the licensing question was discussed, and resolutions were passed to the effect that legal provision should be made for the closing of all houses licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors not later than ten o'clock at night, and that the Government should be recommended to devise stringent measures for the punishment of persons adulterating beer. It was further agreed to embody the resolutions in a memorial, which, after being signed by the Mayor in the name of the justices, should be forwarded to the Home Secretary.

A conference took place in Leeds on Friday for the consideration of the motion to be introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Richard, M.P., for the settlement of international disputes by arbitration. The meeting was held in the Philosophical Hall, under the presidency of Mr. Jowitt, and the attendance included gentlemen from different parts of the Riding. Addresses were delivered by Mr. Pease, M.P., Mr. Carter, M.P., and Mr. Henry Vincent, and a resolution was passed requesting Government to invite other Governments to promote some permanent system of national arbitration. A public meeting was also held in the Victoria Hall in the evening. The same gentlemen addressed the audience (which was a very large one), and resolutions were adopted in favour of arbitration.

Literature.

*AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PSALMS.**

Beyond a doubt Dr. Binnie has hit on a capital idea, an idea which, in competent hands, could hardly fail to produce a book as interesting as it would be instructive. His idea is not to add to the goodly fellowship of commentaries on the Psalms, but to supply an historical and doctrinal introduction to the Psalter, and such an introduction as, while not beneath the notice of the scholar, should yet be specially adapted to the wants of men of average intelligence and culture. The value of such a volume must of course consist in its handling of the theology of the Psalms. All questions of authorship, date, and the significance thrown into this Psalm or that by the period and circumstances which gave it birth, are so largely questions of exegesis that they are best treated in a commentary which deals leisurely with Psalm after Psalm, and either compels the history of the author to throw light on the Psalm he penned, or in the light of the Psalm reads the inner life of the man who wrote it. But in the Commentaries, while the theological conceptions of each of these inspired poems are duly unfolded, no attempt is commonly made to gather into one the theological conceptions of the whole Psalter, to evolve from it either a comprehensive doctrinal creed or a manual of piety. Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, and Perowne, in the introductions or appendices to their several Commentaries, have indeed touched lightly on the theology, and especially on the dogmatic theology, of the Psalms; but they have not, as indeed it was not their business to do, written at large upon it, and still less have they elaborately traced that history of the development of religion in the soul of man the materials of which the Psalter abundantly supplies. This unique collection of hymns and spiritual odes contains authentic records of the most inward and sacred experiences of some of the loftiest and most regal souls the world has seen; it is a book of "confessions" as well as of praises; and as these holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, it contains not only an authentic record of what godly men have felt, but also an authentic intimation of what they ought to feel. Few things would be more helpful to our spiritual life than a thoughtful and tender picture of the experiences and emotions of a devout soul as reflected in the Psalms from points of view so many and so diverse. Were these scattered features brought together, joined each to each, and framed in an expressive context, we should possess a manual of devotion of a supreme excellence—a manual pictorial rather than didactic, in which we should *see* the godly soul in living and vigorous exercise.

This task, however, remains to be done, although Dr. Binnie has written. His main authorities have been Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, and Hupfeld; and from the tone of his volume no less than from that of his acknowledgments, we infer that he is most indebted to Hengstenberg, a man of so hard and dry an intellect that he should never have been allowed to touch a line of poetry, much less of that inspired poetry which throbs with the most tender and sensitive life. To us it has always seemed in reading Hengstenberg's commentary that what he has done for the Psalms is to place them in one of those strange "dripping wells" whose waters transform whatsoever is placed in them into stone. They came out from his hands no longer *psalms* but *petrifactions*. Dr. Binnie's sympathy with Henstenberg is of bad omen, but, happily, the omen is not altogether fulfiled. In his chapters on the history of the Psalms, while he is of a more conservative temper than many will approve, he shows himself far more capable than his master of entering into the beauty and pathos of those "lovely "songs." Indeed, throughout this portion of his volume there is much to commend, much to admire, many suggestive sentences for which the student and the expositor will be grateful. It is in the chapters to which we turned with keenest interest, the chapters on the theology of the Psalms, that he least answers to our expectations and our hopes. He gives three chapters to the Christology of the Psalms, four chapters to the "personal religion" of the Psalms, and three chapters to "social religion," *i.e.*, to

* *The Psalms: their History, Teaching, and Use.* By WILLIAM BINNIE. London: T. Nelson and Sons.

the Church, to the future glories of the Church, and to the Family and the Commonwealth. Even in these chapters, which disappoint us on the whole, there is much valuable thought. To our taste, indeed, Perowne's brief dissertation on "the theology of the Psalms," is worth more than all these ten chapters put together, since it is as much more tender and sympathetic in its tone as it is also more just and accurate both in its conclusions and in the method in which it reaches them. But we must not be misunderstood as implying that Dr. Binnie's work is not also good of its kind. It is very good. Its main defects seem to us to be its doctrinal hardness, and the false stress it lays on the New Testament quotations from the Psalms. Dr. Binnie is too bent on finding Scotch Calvinism in the Hebrew Psalter; and he makes too little allowance for the Apostolic "ethics of "quotation." The dogmas of original sin, inborn depravity, &c., are wrung out from the passionate confessions and figurative Oriental phrases of a devout soul convulsed with shame and remorse, as though these impassioned utterances had been uttered by a logician demonstrating in the schools. And the *hard* tone to which we have referred comes out in such sentences as this: Sin "is a topic on which "men have seldom wished to hear much said, "but on which, *for that very reason*, God has "taken care that all who come within the reach "of His word shall be plainly told the truth"—as if the Father of an infinite mercy were bent on crossing the wishes of His children!

And when Dr. Binnie confirms his deduction of dogma by the use of phrases quoted from the Psalms in the New Testament, he appears to forget the wide difference between the Apostolic usage of citation and that of modern scholars. When *we* cite an ancient author, we are careful to give his exact words, and to give them in the sense in which he used them, unless we acknowledge that we are adapting them to our use. We should adjudge ourselves guilty of dishonesty were we so to cite him as to make him seem to teach what he did not intend to imply. But nothing can be plainer to any student of the New Testament Scriptures than that the Apostolic historians and letter-writers permitted themselves a latitude which we have renounced. They quote the Hebrew prophets and psalmists indifferently from the Septuagint version and the Hebrew original, and at times depart from the exact words of both. When any time-honoured words strike them as expressing their own thought, they do not scruple to use them, although their thought may differ widely from that of the antique author. This latitude of citation, which seems to have pertained to their time rather than to have been peculiar to themselves, is now an established and familiar fact; so that we cannot fairly take their use of words from the Psalter or other Hebrew Scriptures as indicative of the sense in which they were originally employed. Whether Dr. Binnie has overlooked this fact, or whether he questions it, we cannot say; but he certainly backs up his dogmatic inferences with the New Testament citations from the Psalms in a way to which most modern scholars would strongly demur.

Nevertheless, this volume, good in itself despite the drawbacks we have noted, may prepare the way for a still better on the same theme; in which case, we doubt not, Dr. Binnie will feel himself amply rewarded for the labour he has expended upon it.

*HODGE'S THEOLOGY.**

Dr. Hodge has earned a wide and honourable reputation on both sides of the Atlantic. So much has been said, and said by no mean judges, in praise of his lectures to the "men" who have the privilege of studying under him, that we in England have long desired to possess and appraise them for ourselves. This desire was whetted some years since by the publication of "Outlines of Theology," which, as the author, an accomplished son of the venerable professor, himself confessed, was in large measure a succinct and popular reproduction of his father's lectures thrown into the catechetical form. This desire is at last gratified, at least in part. In the large and handsome octavo volume (pp. 648) before us, we have the first instalment of Dr. Hodge's lifelong labours. It is not, of course, without its defects, one of which we judge to be a very serious defect; but on the whole it abundantly justifies the encomiums that have run before it to prepare its way. The grave defect to which we have referred is this. Dr. Hodge holds that all the facts of theology are contained in Scripture. Obviously, therefore, his view of inspiration will affect the very bases of his system, and demands to be argued out with fulness and care. We regret to say that he not only holds what we deem to be the wholly untenable view of *verbal* inspiration, and not only assumes it to be identical with *plenary* inspiration, but fails to answer the most obvious objections to that view, or to allege any arguments for it but the most shallow and insufficient. He has no word to say in reply to an argument so obvious as the citation of the Septuagint version in the New Testament instead of the original Hebrew. Many of these citations, as every tyro is aware, are worded very differently in the Greek and in the Hebrew Scriptures, so differently as that at times the whole sense of a passage is changed. If we believe in *verbal* inspiration, which are we to accept as the true reading, the words written by the Hebrew prophets and psalmists and historians, or those other, and often very different, words quoted by the Apostles from an inaccurate Greek translation of the Hebrew original? This is an objection to which no satisfactory answer has been given by the advocates of the verbal theory, but which very certainly ought to be met by any modern scholar who revives a theory that has so often been slain.

Apart from this grave defect, however, we have found little to except to in the volume, much to commend, much to welcome with gratitude; and especially the learned, able, and thorough refutation of "the oppositions of "science." The anti-theistic theories, whether of materialistic men of science who deny the existence of God, or of the metaphysicians who have lost all hope of knowing God as He is, are met with rare force and with the fervour of one who has proved the faith in which he rests. Professor Huxley—much to his surprise, no doubt—is pressed into the service of evangelical theology, and once more triumphs over Comte; while Dr. Hodge himself encounters Sir William Hamilton and bears him to the ground.

Taken as a whole, however, the volume is not polemical, but affirmative and constructive. In an introduction, which extends over nearly 200 pages, the author discusses the false and true methods of theological inquiry; he defines theology, natural and Christian, and distinguishes theology proper from anthropology, soteriology, eschatology, ecclesiology; he discusses rationalism and mysticism, the Catholic and the Protestant rules of faith. The rest of the volume is devoted to "theology "proper," and consists of chapters on the origin of the idea of God; on theism; on anti-theistic theories ancient and modern; on the knowledge of God, with especial reference to the metaphysics of Sir William Hamilton and the Transcendentalists; on the nature and attributes of God; on the Trinity; on the Divinity of Christ; on the Holy Spirit; on the decrees of God; on creation, providence, miracles, and angels. All these great themes and mysteries are handled with reverence, with an entire knowledge of even the most modern and subtle forms of scepticism and unbelief; and if the arguments employed do not in every case rise to a victorious close, they invariably command respect. In fine, this great work, when complete, will be an admirable handbook for the theological classes in our colleges, as well as a valuable compendium for all who take an intelligent interest in the scientific and dogmatic aspects of the Christian faith.

* *Systematic Theology.* By CHARLES HODGE, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princetown, New Jersey. Vol. I. (London: Thomas Nelson and Son.)

*A PRACTICAL WORKER FOR THE POOR.**

An interesting article in the new number of *Good Words* has led us to study a very remarkable book. It is not, however, because of graces of style, or anything the least striking in a popular way, that we are compelled to regard it as one of the most noteworthy works that have for years fallen from the British press. It is for the altogether commonplace qualities of dry detail and faithful record of devoted labour in subjects far enough from being romantic in themselves. It is often said that chivalry is dead; and we hear much railing about the selfishness of classes and of individuals; but when Edward Denison, at the early age of twenty-seven, left the town residence of his family at Chesham-place, to go into lodgings in Philpot-street, Commercial-road, with no object save the benefit of the poor and needy, he was as true a knight-errant as ever drew lance in tournament, or "rode forth redressing human "wrongs." His story, told with no embellishment—for it needs none—is a sort of epic; there is a kind of poetic unity and completeness about it that defies all carping or criticism. We can only reverence and admire; and lay down the book with a happy sigh, and say, "There is true greatness among us still, and "greatness so entirely consecrated to ends the "noblest, that it can at no point be distinguished from goodness." The influences of such a man's short, self-denying life, given up to quiet, unceasing labour for the good of others, are incalculable: his words will be found powerful to unite men for common ends of good in years hereafter; and therefore it was right that his letters should be published—they are a legacy to which the thoughtful of all classes in our country should quickly serve themselves heir.

Edward Denison was the son of the Bishop of Salisbury, and was born in 1840. A spirited boy, he was fond of all outdoor sports; and, when at Eton and Oxford, he distinguished himself both as a sportsman and a student. He rowed well; he rode well; he was a good shot. But ere he had reached manhood, he had heard so much about the condition of the poor in England, that his curiosity was excited; he inquired, he read, and the more he got to know, the more he felt that things were in an awful condition. But he did not stand apart and sympathise sentimentally, without seeking to soil his fingers. He took a resolution to devote all his time, means, and energy to inquiry and to working in this great cause; and nobly did he carry it out. From the year 1862 to 1866 he travelled, chiefly on account of his health, in Italy, in the south of France, in Switzerland, and in Madeira, and he had been careful to take note of what he observed as affecting the welfare of the lower classes in these countries. As we shall see, he got much—very much—from Switzerland. On his return to England, the great distress broke out in the East-end of London; and he enlisted himself as one of the Visitors or Almoners for the relief of Distress. He soon learned several things: First of all the futility of a poor law, as then administered; next the incalculable mischief done by indiscriminate charity-giving; then the necessity for a system of State secular education; and the terrible evils likely to come of the ever-widening chasm that exists between East London and West London—rich London and poor London; between metropolitan luxury and metropolitan want. The more that he saw of squalor and starvation, of vice and ignorance, only linked him the more firmly to the East-end; and, in July, 1867, that he might lose no time in journeys from East to West, he went to reside in Philpot-street, Commercial-road. In justification of his course—as though it needed to be explained and apologised for—he thus writes to a friend:—

"There are hardly any residents in the East rich enough to give much money, or with enough leisure to give much time. This is the evil. Even the best disposed in the West don't like coming so far off, and, indeed, few have the time to spare, and when they do there is a great waste of time and energy in the journey. My plan is the only really practicable one, and as I have both means, time, and inclination, I should be a thief and a murderer if I withheld what I so evidently owe. I can read law much better here than in the West, and still have much time to spare for my neighbours; so I shall stay here this winter at all events. . . . It is this unbroken level of poverty, as you know, which is the blight over East London; which makes any temporary distress so severely felt, and any sustained effort to better its condition so difficult to bring to a successful issue. The lever has to be applied from a distance, and sympathy is not strong enough to stand the strain. It was as a visitor for the Society for the Relief of Distress that I first began my connection with this spot, *which I shall not sever until some visible change in effected in its condition.*"

Over the winter he accordingly did stay, in Philpot-street, watching the guardians, forcing them to take action in cases of overcrowding in fever-stricken streets, teaching the children, and giving familiar lectures in Bible history to the dock-labourers in the evenings. He was literally ceaseless; the more he saw that needed mending the more did he feel himself bound to the East-end. "My opinion," he says, "of the "great sphere of usefulness to which I should "find myself admitted by coming here is com-"pletely justified. All is yet in embryo—but "it will grow. Just now I only teach in a "night school, and do what in me lies in look-"ing after the sick; keeping an eye upon "nuisances and the like, seeing that the local "authorities keep up to their work. They are "certain evils which, where there are no resi-"dent gentry, grow to a height almost incre-"dible, and in which the remedial influence of "the presence of a gentleman known to be on "the alert is inestimable. I have the advan-"tage of having known the parish doctor for "some time; and what is better, he is an "energetic, kindly man, always ready to second "any attempts to remedy abuses. You see the "mere giving of money (though a certain "supply of it is indispensable) is really the "most subordinate function that I propose to "exercise."

In the midst of these enterprises, he never

* *Edward Denison, the Friend of the Poor.* By BENJAMIN ORME. *Good Words* for February. (Strahan and Co.)

Letters and other Writings of the late Edward Denison, M.P. for Newark. Edited by Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON, Bart. (Richard Bentley and Son.)

ceases to think with the utmost calmness, bringing to each question the quiet, prepared mind of a political economist. He never raved, did not readily take up with new ideas, to ride them for a little while to death, and then drop them for new ones. He perceived the laws that lay at the root of the problem, and wrought with a quiet enthusiasm that looked only to the far future for decided results. He had no hope of any real relief to the mother country from emigration, believing that by its means the flower of the population only would be carried away, and the social dregs, by whose removal alone she could be benefited, still left behind to vex her. He is a sound thinker, never proceeding without having got to a solid basis of principle. Hence his sorrow over the loose volunteer charity, and yet his recognition of the value of voluntaryism; his deliberate idea being that the most efficient system of poor-law administration would be a Government audit and inspection for the funds voluntarily raised and partly distributed by volunteers also. He visited France and Scotland and carefully inquired into their systems of dealing with the poor, only to have his opinion as to this thoroughly confirmed. He was no bigot. His sincere desire for the welfare of the poor raised him above prejudices, even above the prejudices which his birth and up-bringing might have made excusable in him. He is never wearied of condemning the Christianity that is preached by Pharisees and Sadducees; but he is as constant in his declaration that he has no hope of the elevation of the poor apart from Christianity and Scripture instruction. He would educate; but without Christianity education is incomplete. His sympathies, however, are so thoroughly with those whose interests he has at heart that he declares "these are they to whom "the Gospel was sent," and demands why it is that the clergy "did not go to the poor people "as he proposed to go," with the Bible in his hand, to instruct them familiarly with its great facts and doctrines. "A Christianity taught by "Pharisees and illustrated by Sadducees in purple "and fine linen, has failed to reach their hearts, "and no wonder. And then men say, forsooth, "that Christianity won't do now—it does not "satisfy the instincts of humanity. It is not "Christianity, but Christians, that are wanting. ". . . *I am convinced that the days are preg-* "*nant with as much spiritual as temporal good for* "*these down-trodden brothers of ours, whom we* "*have elbowed out of our Churches, as well as* "*ignored in our laws.*"

He saw clearly that, by way of preparing the soil, the rough ploughing and harrowing of secular education were essential. His testimony in favour of a system of State secular education, indeed, is the most surprising and influential which has yet been brought forward. It is a testimony, so to speak, against all the early associations and traditions of the witness, and yet there it is clear, emphatic, philosophic. His words on this point are worth the widest possible circulation—

"One great change of opinion," he confesses at an early date, "I owe to Switzerland—at least, I have nearly made up my mind on the subject. Two months ago I was an enemy of the Conscience Clause: not that I wished to make Dissenters forcibly into Churchmen, but I thought making religion an open question in a school would discredit it, and prevent the teaching effectually, not of one creed, but of any at all. Now, every Commune in Switzerland is bound to maintain a secular school, in which Protestants and Catholics are taught together, each getting their religious instruction from their respective pastors. Protestants and Catholics are nearly half-and-half in many of the cantons, but I do not hear that the Catholics complain of a falling-off from their communion. Of course, its result, even here, where the system has been long at work, cannot be settled off-hand, and I shall inquire further: but the only priest I have spoken to on the subject seemed to have no objection to the 'godless' school."

Every effort he put forth, every difficulty he experienced during his practical work in the East-end, only tended to confirm him in this opinion. He confesses that "the general effect "on me of my present experience is a convic- "tion of the complete inadequacy of, and even "evil of, the present system of voluntaryism, as "much on account of the badness of the teach- "ing, as from its actual want of extent. I "comfort myself with the confident hope that "we are even at the threshold of State secular "education. Elementary mental training is "but making the jar: it is no argument against "the jar that you don't know what may get "into it, unless you are allowed also to fill and "solder it up. People must have a very queer "notion of human nature who fancy that a "mind which has been taught to think will be "a less fit receptacle of Divine truth than one "which is incapable of thinking. I am inclined "to say with the Roman Emperor, when he "was told the Christians were about to destroy "a temple, 'Let the Gods defend themselves.' "I feel it a blasphemy even to think that God's "truth can suffer by the extension of man's "truth."

At the request of his friends Mr. Denison agreed to become a candidate for the representation of Newark, and was successful. He had no very keen interest in politics, strictly so called; but he fancied that a seat in Parliament might aid him in the realisation of some of his beloved schemes. He himself says significantly, "The problems of the time are all social, and "to social problems must the mind of the legis- "lature be bent for some time to come. We "are feeling the sort of discomfort which may "afflict the crab whose shell has got too tight "for him, and which he is about to split and "cast off preparatory to clothing himself with a "new one."

He made no great figure in Parliament, having only spoken once on pauperism. He produced no impression commensurate with his thought and knowledge of that subject. This may be attributed to many causes. There was a certain directness, depth of conviction, and want of calculation in him; and the Parliamentary speaker should, in a certain sense, be without convictions or never press them baldly forward. He must be accommodating—fence and guard and watch impressions, and trim and tack, and sail to catch all winds. Mr. Denison was not of this type, and so far he was not fitted to flourish in the atmosphere of the House of Commons. The more pity 'tis so, but so it is. There is so much truth in what the writer in *Good Words* has said on this point that we quote some sentences:—

"The truth is, Mr. Denison's mind was not political. He approached every question directly from the social side; and, however much men of his cast may be needed to temper the political atmosphere, they can neither be interested in party dodges, nor be got to run smoothly in any of the ordinary Parliamentary grooves, even although it should be demonstrated that 'submissions' of this sort would finally win the influence that would at length make their ideas triumphant. The habit of regarding themselves as being called on to act directly, in some form or other, on human misery, disqualifies them for the balance and calculation and suspense of personal impulse which is so essential to successful political action. They dislike indirect or roundabout ways, even to open up avenues of influence. They find little or no joy in the refinements and the *finesse* of debate. They are impatient of that kind of subterfuge which forms so large an element in the political mind, and which leads some men, even of the highest type, to make feint to put conscience somewhat in the background, even when they have no interests apart from those of conscience. Mr. Denison was not a man of one idea; but he was too strictly a philanthropist to be a great politician in the common sense."

He himself wrote very significantly when he was contesting Newark—"Really, some of "these electors disgust me. I don't think it's "my *métier*. I almost hope they won't have "me, and then I'll take to literature. I believe "abstract political speculation rather is my "*métier*. Only very strong ambition can in- "duce a man to lie and cringe enough for "political success. You see I'm rather bilious. "I've been all alone in an inn for three days." Long before this he had said, "It seems to me "quite a practical question for a man to ask "himself at the beginning of life, 'What is my "'work?—which sort shall I apprentice myself "'to?' If one decides against politics, one "does not thereby condemn them, but only "pronounce them less effectual instruments for "the end than others."

He was not permitted long to sit in Parliament. Alarming symptoms recurred in the autumn of 1869, and he had to face either the prospect of speedy death or a voyage to the Antipodes. He at once prepared to sail for Australia, characteristically comforting himself with the idea that he might there study favourably the questions of emigration and colonisation, in which he could not help being much interested. He died about a fortnight after he reached Melbourne, having scarcely completed his thirtieth year. He did a great work, bore a noble practical testimony against the sordidness of the time, and his name claims to be added to the list of disinterested benefactors of their species. He did even more than if he had discovered a new continent, or won a famous victory.

London: a Pilgrimage. Parts I. and II. By GUSTAVE DORÉ and BLANCHARD JERROLD. Gustave Doré's powerful grotesque does not at first impress one with the idea that it would be very faithful in representing scenes so grimly real and near at hand as the street-life of lower London—for with that the two Parts as yet published have been largely concerned. Yet he is to a great extent at once faithful and effective. He catches prevailing traits and just emphasises them by his peculiar style. He is skilful in choosing his point of view, and manages to throw in light sometimes rather abundantly; but in no case does he fail to get striking effects, whether or not he may be in all points truthful. Where he fails is mostly in the few instances where he deals with mixed and fashionable life—especially in the sketch of "The Great Tree in Kensington Gardens," where the whole takes on an indescribable French tone—and notably the group seated on the right of the tree, both the man and the girls. The light is so strongly used as to render the picture patched and flaky. The most truthful and striking is perhaps the "Coffee-stall—Early Morning." But the finest of all, in our opinion, are the little initial pictures and vignettes, which are wonderfully spirited, touched with great decision, and full of character. Mr. Blanchard Jerrold's letter-press is quite in keeping with the pictures. It is sketchy, graphic, never losing itself in over detail, which is a great merit, but one which it is very difficult to attain in dealing with such a subject. As has been well said, selection and condensation are, after all, the great secrets of realistic writing, so that the editor, who recommended his contributor after visiting such scenes, to get drunk and take a night to sleep on it, before putting pen to paper, had a sharp, Sam-Slickish notion of what was what! Mr. Jerrold keeps wisely to typical scenes, characters, and situations; and thus brings things more vividly before the mind than could be done by never-ending expansion. In some respects this promises to be a great work; and we shall look forward with interest for the future Parts of it.

Miscellaneous.

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETIES AND 'THE LIVINGSTONE EXPEDITION.—The Rev. R. Bushell, Sheffield, secretary to the United Methodist Free Churches, writes:—"I am glad to inform you that our officers have most readily complied with the request of the Royal Geographical Society to allow our missionary, the Rev. Charles New, of East Africa, to accompany the Livingstone Search Expidition, and act as interpreter. He has been ten years in the locality, knows the habits and dialects of the tribes, and has recently made an important, though perilous, tour into the interior." The Lord Mayor yesterday presided over a public meeting at the Mansion House in furtherance of the Livingstone search fund. The subscriptions for that object now amount to about 3,000*l.*

THE EDUCATION LEAGUE.—The reasons for the adoption of a new programme by the National Education League (which was given in our last number) are stated at length in a circular which was issued on Saturday. This document points out that it is no longer possible to secure the original objects of the League by merely endeavouring to supplement the deficiencies of the denominational system. The efforts of the League and of kindred organisations must now be directed towards remodelling the present system in such a manner as to secure efficient control by the State and the ratepayers, and at the same time to afford to the denominations the fullest opportunity of giving religious instruction in accordance with their respective opinions.

PRESENTATION TO MR. TILLETT, OF NORWICH.—On Friday night, Mr. Tillett was presented by the electors of Norwich with his portrait and an address, illuminated on vellum. Mr. Young, who presided on the occasion, said that the portrait was presented by a large number of Mr. Tillett's fellow-citizens as a token of the esteem in which they held his long and valuable services to the Liberal party. The corporation had readily agreed to give the portrait one of the best positions in the Citizen's-hall. Mr. Tillett, in reply, said that he had declined the compliment twelve years ago, but having accepted it he returned his heartiest thanks. He contended that the Liberal programme had been carried, with the single exception of the ballot, by going for one thing at a time. Now disorder, discredit, and defeat were threatening them by trying so many things at once, and thereby producing failure. Mr. Colman, M.P., afterwards made a speech. About 4,000 persons were present.

ORPHAN WORKING SCHOOL.—The 114th annual meeting and election of the above institution were held on Monday, at the London Tavern, Mr. John Remington Mills in the chair. Mr. Finch, the secretary, read a long report, of which the following is an abstract:—The number of children now in the institution at Haverstock-hill is 353, and 25 more will be elected on the present occasion from a list of 120 candidates. The school has accommodation for 400 children, if the state of the funds allowed that number to be received. The health of the children has been good during the year, discipline has been well maintained, and the educational reports of the examiners show the thorough efficiency of the instruction. For several years past the boys have contended for the prizes given by the Science and Art Department at South Kensington, and on each occasion with very satisfactory results. Two children, whose fathers were lost in the Captain, have been admitted to the school without election or payment. The committee deeply regret that the annual subscription list does not increase, as upon this list mainly depends the prosperity of the institution. The annual income required is about 10,000*l.* The income from subscriptions averages only 2,400*l.*, and from property 2,200*l.*, leaving 5,400*l.* to be raised annually by donations, special appeals, &c. The committee have to acknowledge a donation of 1,000*l.* from "O.M.S.," the first donation of the kind received by this charity. The total receipts for the past year amount to 9,271*l.* 5s. 2d., and the expenditure to 9,118*l.* 13s. 7d., leaving a cash balance of 152*l.* 11s. 7d. The invested stock was 3,893*l.* The chairman having made a strong appeal for extended support to the institution, the report was adopted, and, the routine of business having been transacted, the election was proceeded with.

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(TESTIMONIALS.)
(From the "Mechanics' Magazine.")
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(From the "Family Herald," Sept. 3.)
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FORGERY.—Victoria 25 and 26, chap. 88.
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